

## § 161.1

## 33 CFR Ch. I (7–1–15 Edition)

161.23 Reporting exemptions.

### Subpart C—Vessel Traffic Service and Vessel Movement Reporting System Areas and Reporting Points

- 161.25 Vessel Traffic Service New York Area.
- 161.30 Vessel Traffic Service Louisville.
- 161.35 Vessel Traffic Service Houston/Galveston.
- 161.40 Vessel Traffic Service Berwick Bay.
- 161.45 Vessel Traffic Service St. Marys River.
- 161.50 Vessel Traffic Service San Francisco.
- 161.55 Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound and the Cooperative Vessel Traffic Service for the Juan de Fuca Region.
- 161.60 Vessel Traffic Service Prince William Sound.
- 161.65 Vessel Traffic Service Lower Mississippi River.
- 161.70 Vessel Traffic Service Port Arthur.

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SOURCE: CGD 90–020, 59 FR 36324, July 15, 1994, unless otherwise noted.

### Subpart A—Vessel Traffic Services

#### GENERAL RULES

#### § 161.1 Purpose and Intent.

(a) The purpose of this part is to promulgate regulations implementing and enforcing certain sections of the Ports and Waterways Safety Act (PWSA) setting up a national system of Vessel Traffic Services that will enhance navigation, vessel safety, and marine environmental protection, and promote safe vessel movement by reducing the potential for collisions, ramblings, and groundings, and the loss of lives and property associated with these incidents within VTS areas established hereunder.

(b) Vessel Traffic Services provide the mariner with information related to the safe navigation of a waterway. This information, coupled with the mariner's compliance with the provisions set forth in this part, enhances the safe routing of vessels through congested waterways or waterways of particular hazard. Under certain circumstances, a VTS may issue directions to control the movement of vessels in order to minimize the risk of

collision between vessels, or damage to property or the environment.

(c) The owner, operator, charterer, master, or person directing the movement of a vessel remains at all times responsible for the manner in which the vessel is operated and maneuvered, and is responsible for the safe navigation of the vessel under all circumstances. Compliance with these rules or with a direction of the VTS is at all times contingent upon the exigencies of safe navigation.

(d) Nothing in this part is intended to relieve any vessel, owner, operator, charterer, master, or person directing the movement of a vessel from the consequences of any neglect to comply with this part or any other applicable law or regulation (e.g., the International Regulations for Prevention of Collisions at Sea, 1972 (72 COLREGS) or the Inland Navigation Rules) or of the neglect of any precaution which may be required by the ordinary practice of seamen, or by the special circumstances of the case.

#### § 161.2 Definitions.

For the purposes of this part:

*Cooperative Vessel Traffic Services (CVTS)* means the system of vessel traffic management established and jointly operated by the United States and Canada within adjoining waters. In addition, CVTS facilitates traffic movement and anchorages, avoids jurisdictional disputes, and renders assistance in emergencies in adjoining United States and Canadian waters.

*Hazardous Vessel Operating Condition* means any condition related to a vessel's ability to safely navigate or maneuver, and includes, but is not limited to:

(1) The absence or malfunction of vessel operating equipment, such as propulsion machinery, steering gear, radar system, gyrocompass, depth sounding device, automatic radar plotting aid (ARPA), radiotelephone, Automatic Identification System equipment, navigational lighting, sound signaling devices or similar equipment.

(2) Any condition on board the vessel likely to impair navigation, such as lack of current nautical charts and publications, personnel shortage, or similar condition.